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The Big Four and one more

*He who takes what isn't his'n,
When he's pinched will go to pris'n.*

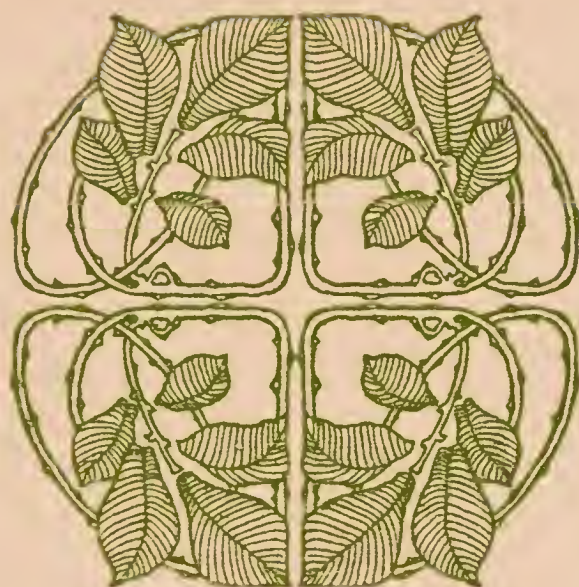


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THE BIG FOUR
AND ONE MORE





*“The sparks flew left and right about him; the steel of the tomahawks
flashed in his face”*

THE
BIG FOUR
and One More

BY
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and other stories

Frontispiece by Leslie Thrasher



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no 1

To
MY BOYS

THE BIG FOUR
AND ONE MORE

THE BIG FOUR

AND ONE MORE

CHAPTER I.



ROUND a camp fire at the edge of the pine woods that formed a background for the village of Pemberton, in Minnesota, were grouped four boys.

The boys were known in the village as the "Big Four," for they were the leaders in every undertaking — big or little.

Peter Fendall was the leader of the group; he was the grandson of the pioneer of the village — a man of distinction in the State. Peter was a boy of high standards and the boys all loved him because he was a good sport and, as Billy Bruce said, "You could always bet on Peter." Peter was "Big Chief" of the boys' out-of-door club and head of the Big Four.

THE BIG FOUR

Billy Bruce was "Chief Big Ear," the name suggested by the size of Billy's ears and the acuteness of his hearing. Billy was the Red Men's best scout.

Jack Bennett was Chief Medicine Man because his father was the village doctor, and sometimes surgeon, a very important man in the village. Jack did a great deal of plastering and bandaging for the Big Four in the way of First Aid.

Timothy Ware was called "Little Chief Big Heart," for although Tim was small of stature he had the heart of a giant and great endurance.

The boys' club was called the "Red Men's Club." Just why it was the Red Men's no one knew, unless it was that they claimed to be really truly Americans. They were all Chiefs, as you see, so avoiding the danger of heated controversy.

The Chiefs seated around the fire were having a very earnest discussion. Sitting on a stump near-by playing with a chipmunk, one eye on the chipmunk and one on the group around the fire, was the object of their discus-

—AND ONE MORE

sion, Micky Mac Rae, generally known as the worst boy in town.

Micky loved little Tim Ware and had begged of him to be taken into the Red Men's Club, promising by all the marbles in his pocket that he would be good and bring no disgrace upon the "Big Four" whose record had never had a blemish.

Little Tim's heart went out to the boy and he had put up the question to the Chiefs, as they sat around the fire, of taking Micky into the Club.

Peter said, as he speared a piece of crispy bacon from the pan and held it up to curl and cool, "How could we be the Big Four if we took Mick in?"

Bruce, who was the politician of the group, — his father was the President of the Village, — spoke up quickly,

"We could be the Big Four and One More — that would n't be quite the same as the whole thing you know."

"Uh-huh," said Peter thoughtfully.

"You know, Chiefs, we got to get some money some way, our treasury has only twenty-seven

THE BIG FOUR

cents, — that won't go far to buy things, — Micky is a good fellah at trapping and business, they say." So spoke Jack, who was the treasurer of the Club.

Tim sat with his chin in his hands thinking hard. When he looked up the boys said,

"Well, Tim, what shall we do?"

"I've been thinking," said Tim with his sweet smile, "that we might do a big thing for the town by taking Micky in; I believe there's a chance of making a good citizen out of Mick — he's got a lot of good in him — he's awful kind-hearted, you know. When Miss Finster (the village seamstress) lost her black cat and every one felt so sorry for her but never tried to get her another, Micky found Miss Finster's cat dead in the woods, and he hunted until he found a stray cat just like it, only it had two white spots on its back.

"Well, Mick got some black paint and painted those spots black, and then he taught the cat to come to the name 'Tansy,' just like Miss Finster's original. When Mick took the painted cat to Miss Finster and said he'd found it (he did n't say *her* cat), he was n't telling a lie,

—AND ONE MORE

was he? And poor Miss Finster was so happy that she wanted to kiss Micky, and would have, but he just wriggled out of her hands. She said no one could ever tell her that Micky Mac Rae was the worst boy in town, but later she could not understand why Tansy turned gray in spots, and why she took to the woods at the sign of a paint brush. Micky had hard work to keep his face sober when she asked his advice about it."

"I say that's good enough, boys," said Peter. "If Micky would take pains to do that for an old maid who was no relation to him, he is a good chap. If he is not truthful we will soon know it. I *know* he is loyal, for he fought almost to a real finish that boy who stepped on our flag and said something in a foreign language that Mick thought insulting to the flag." Bruce added: "He is fearless, I know, for he went right into Mrs. Smith's house the night it burned and carried out her treasures. Some people were mean enough to say he probably set the house on fire, but no one could make me believe that of Mick; he is full of fun and mischief but I believe he is honest and

THE BIG FOUR

true. I say let's try him and see. If he is really bad it will be easy to drop the 'One More.'"

The boys voted a solid vote "Yes" for Mick. Then they were ready to call the little boy at once, but Tim felt there were some things to be considered although he was delighted at the unanimous vote for Micky—his friend. He asked Peter to call them to order and said, "There are some things to consider, Chiefs, Mick must be initiated first of all."

"And pay an initiation fee," said Jack, ever conscious of the treasury.

"I say, boys, what shall we call him?" said Bruce.

"Chief of Cats?" asked Jack, who loved a joke.

"Oh, no, that would give him away," said Tim.

"Chief Never Too Late To Mend" was finally decided upon.

"Let's leave off the last two words," suggested Peter. "It might be embarrassing." And so the last two words were left off and Micky never knew why he was "Never Too Late." But he didn't care what he was as

—AND ONE MORE

long as he got his heart's desire and was taken into the Red Men's Club by the Big Four.

The Four Chiefs stood and in great dignity raised their hands and voices to summon Micky from his stump. Peter was spokesman, and as the little bare-footed, freckle-faced, sinewy-limbed boy joined the group he said,

"Come in, Mick, we're going to take you into the Red Men's Club on the following conditions: that you make so good that the village of Pemberton forgets that you were ever called the worst boy in town."

Mick looked up at Peter with a grin and said, "But Peter, I would n't be here to join this Club if I was so awful good, 'cause I heard Deacon Beabout say, 'The good die young,' so it don't pay to be so awful good, but I'm goin' to make myself good enough to stay in the Red Men's Club. Say, fellahs, what's the initiation fee?" Mick anxiously awaited their answer, with visions of things he could not produce.

"The initiation fee," said Peter, looking at the boys for corroboration, "is — one skunk skin, one whole woodchuck skin, two gray squirrels, one rabbit, two dozen apples (red),

THE BIG FOUR

ten cents in change, and enough feathers for our headdresses in the parade."

"Gee whilikins! How much time do you give a fellah to get all that game? That's some big business for a kid like me."

"Well, this is June 4th," said Peter, "that gives you a whole month. We have been asked to join the 4th of July parade, and we must make a good show, for you know that new Club called the Boy Scouts is coming over from St. Paul and we don't want them to get ahead of us. We 'Big Four' have always run things in this town and run them pretty well, we think. We are n't sure the town needs anything better. We've done our best to care for the poor. Have n't we chopped down trees and made firewood for poor old palsied Ellen? We have shovelled snow from the walks of the widows and fatherless and old maids. We've tried to keep up our good deeds at the rate of one or so a week, but now here comes these Boy Scouts doing a good deed every day. Gee whizz! Chiefs, we've got to do them one better."

"Well, I don't know what we will do," said Bruce dolefully.

—AND ONE MORE

“I tell you, we’ll hunt up some widows and fatherless in the outskirts, a lot of them, all that we can find, and do two good deeds every day,” answered Tim.

“Good, Tim, we can’t let these Scouts from St. Paul put up a better show in this town than the Big Four,” said Peter.

“Mick must see our By-Laws before we initiate him,” said Bruce, who was secretary of the Club.

“Sure, there they are Mick, read ’em,” said Peter as Jack drew a folded sheet of paper from his pocket and handed it to Mick.

BY-LAWS AND CONSTITUTION OF THE BIG FOUR’S RED MEN’S CLUB.

ARTIKUL I.

Meetings to be held in farmer Pillsbury’s corn crib when not full.

1. There is to be no quarling, fine one cent.
2. There is to be no bad langwidge used, fine one cent.
3. There is to be no spiting on flore, fine one cent.

THE BIG FOUR

4. Dus of two cents must be pade the first of month.
5. Members must always rise when ladies come in, one cent.
6. Members must always take off their hats in the presence of ladies, one cent.
7. No smoking — only corn silk, one cent.
8. No person must lite matches in the corn crib, it's dangerus, one cent.

ARTIKUL II.

Section I. By a two-thirds vote any member may be suspended or fined for doing anything unconstitushinal.

ARTIKUL III.

It will be the duty of any member to see that clothes and the like are kept clean and everything in order.

ARTIKUL IV.

When there is anything patriotic going on in the town the members of the Big Four must take a active part in it.

THE END — SO BE IT.

Signed and Sealed: PETER FENDALL,
 JACK BENNETT,
 WILLIAM BRUCE,

Sealed by a drop of real blood. TIMOTHY WARE.

Ignorance of these rules not excepted.

—AND ONE MORE

Micky, with serious face and tongue in one cheek, read with some difficulty (it must be said) the By-Laws of the Red Men's Club, and with a dignified bow of approval, too greatly impressed for words, handed back the very smudgy By-Laws to Jack.

"You see, Mick, we got to make some money for our outfit in that 4th of July parade," said Jack. "That is why we have to ask such a big initiation fee. Those Scouts will be all dressed up in uniform and we've got to have some feathers. We've all got to do our best in every line. I know you can get all those animals — I'd be glad to help you if you like."

"I'm on, Jack," said Mick, "I'll do my part. I'll get them animals."

Tim whispered in Mick's ear, "Good boy, Mick, but say *those* animals," and Mick winked yes.

Peter drew himself up with dignity, making every inch count, and, to tell the truth, there were a good many inches of very good-looking boy in Peter.

Addressing the Chiefs around the camp fire, he said, "Now we will proceed with the ini-

THE BIG FOUR

tiation. Attention Chiefs! Michael Mac Rae, commonly known as Micky, is to be taken into the sacred circle of the Red Men's Club. Chief Big Ear, scan the paths and listen with your strong ear to the ground to assure us that no white man intrudes upon our ceremony. Stir up the camp fire, Little Chief Big Heart, and Chief Medicine Man, get ready your first aids to the injured, in case of any weakness in the subject under initiation. Are the torches ready, Chief Big Ear? And have you the tomahawks sharpened?"

By this time Micky's eyes were popping out of his head and his hair was gradually rising. To a close observer his knees suggested uncertainty.

The sun had gone down and the woods were dark in the background. The fir trees looked like sentinels guarding the camp. Jack brought the four pine-knot torches lighted from the fire. The waving of the blazing torches made the figures of the boys dance and grow weirdly tall against the dark shadows.

Micky was made to stand in a circle drawn by Billy Bruce. Then the Big Four Chiefs,

—AND ONE MORE

each armed with a blazing torch in one hand and a tomahawk in the other, began dancing around Micky in a most devilish and terrifying way.

The sparks from the torches flew left and right about him; the steel of the tomahawks flashed in his face. From some pocket red paint had been produced, enough to make the faces of the four chiefs gleam blood red in the firelight.

Faster and faster danced the fiendish figures; thicker flew the sparks. One landed on poor Micky's arm and burned right through the thin shirt but he never flinched. A waving tomahawk just grazed his leg but he stood rigid. Scared stiff he was *inside*, but to all outward appearances as cool and brave as any of Peter Fendall's pioneer ancestors.

The boys danced, shouting bloodcurdling yells, until the torches burned low. Then throwing them on the fire they stacked their tomahawks at Micky's feet, grasped his hand, and hailed him as "Chief Never Too Late."

Peter then said, "Now, Chief Never Too Late, you have proven yourself a brave man, and

THE BIG FOUR

are received into the Red Men's Club. From now on we will be called the 'Big Four and One More.'"

Micky gathered himself together and tried hard to forget the burn on his arm and his shaking nerves as he said, "Big Chiefs — I thank you for the honor you show me, and I will be on hand July 2nd with the initiation stuff, and I hope you will never be sorry you took me in; I will do my best."

Peter called the Chiefs to order now to discuss the parade.

"We must make some money some way for we will need lots of things to make a good show in the parade," said Billy Bruce.

"We got to have some animuls — a parade ain't no parade without animuls," added Jack.

"I think Father will let me have our cow," said Peter, "but just bein' a cow won't be any excitement."

"No," Micky answered thoughtfully, "nothing excitin' about a plain cow. I tell you what we'll do. We'll make a zebra out o' her — we'll paint her in waving stripes. How would

—AND ONE MORE

it be to make a real 4th of July cow out of her and paint her red, white and blue?"

"Glorious," said admiring Tim under his breath.

"But where will we get the paint?" Jack asked, conscious always of the limits of the treasury.

Peter answered quickly, "We'll borrow some from Deacon Beabout. He's got some red paint to paint his chicken coop, and red stripes with white stripes and a few polka dots of blue would be just lovely on our old cow."

"I bet there will be some *big polka dots* when we get painting," giggled Tim.

"My old billy goat will make a show," said Billy Bruce questioningly.

"Sure, Bill, and I will bring my pet rabbits on my express cart," ventured Tim.

"Let's paint 'em all like they do the ships — camelflage, they call it," said Mick.

"Oh, yes, let's make 'em all look like something they're not," said Peter, warm with enthusiasm.

"Let's paint the rabbits pink with dots of blue and their ears yellow with purple lining." Tim's imagination was working.

THE BIG FOUR

“Great,” exclaimed Jack, “why, we can have a whole menagerie if we do that. I wish we had something big like an elephant or a horse; of course it would take more paint, but it would fill in better than rabbits,” with an apologetic look toward Tim.

Ever ready Micky said, “I’ll tell you fellers, Chiefs I mean, there’s an old white horse let loose in a pasture about a quarter of a mile outside of town and he does n’t seem to belong to any one. I go out sometimes and ride him around the pasture. I’ll ride him in and if we can get some red, white and blue paint we can make a picture out of him, sure thing.”

The boys all danced with joy at Micky’s suggestion, and Peter felt sure with a patriotic horse and cow, a polka-dotted goat, to say nothing of snakes and rabbits, a success was sure.

“I think my Father will give me my July allowance a little before July 1st if I tell him I need it very badly,” said Peter.

“I’ll try my Dad, too,” said Jack.

“Well, I think my Father ought to give me something too,” said Billy, “for it will be to the Mayor’s glory to have a fine parade.”

—AND ONE MORE

Poor little Tim was silent. Boys are cruel little animals but the boys did n't mean to hurt Tim, and their hearts went out to him at once. Tim's father had lost his life while flying in the Lafayette Escadrille in France. He had landed over the German lines badly injured but by great strategy and heroism had escaped from the German camp and worked his way over to the French lines by crawling a few inches at a time; but the effort and loss of blood were too much for his strength and he died in a hospital back of the firing lines.

Mick came to Tim's rescue, "I ain't got no Pa, Tim. Anyway, I never seen my Pa, he died when I was born. I just got a Uncle; he's an awful big man — my Ma's brother, he's big like a policeman. He's the giant in Barnum and Bailey's Circus, but I never seen him."

"You must say 'saw,'" whispered Timmy, who felt responsible for Mick's improvement. His heart was grateful to Micky but he could n't easily express it just then.

"Alright, Tim, I never did saw him, it's a fact."

THE BIG FOUR

"But, Mick, don't say *did* and *saw* too," pleaded Tim.

"Alright, I just as soon cut," said Mick, undaunted.

Tim gave it up.

"I wisht I could get my Uncle for the parade — would n't it be a cinch, though?"

"Try it Mick, try it," said Peter enthusiastically.

"Well, if I can't get a *horse*, I'll try my *Uncle*," answered Mick proudly.

"Now, Chiefs, it is getting late and we must disband to meet next week at this place, and bring all the paint we can scrape together and any feathers we can find to make our head-dresses. Remember we need a lot of feathers to make a show," cautioned Peter.

The boys separated with their brains teeming with plans for the parade. There were many wide-awake eyes that night as each boy lay planning what he could do to make the parade a success, and there were many night-mares too, *red*, *white* and *blue* painted night-mares.

CHAPTER II.



THE days passed only too quickly for Micky. He was determined to bring his full quota of initiation fee, so he set traps far and near and caught two rabbits and a woodchuck. He could not devise a way to catch a skunk without getting too near it, until one day a happy thought came to him. Why not try a lariat?

So one afternoon after school Micky went out in the woods with a determined "to do or die" expression. Fortune favored him; he saw a wood pussy sleeping under a tree. He swung his lariat but missed. Slipping up softly with stick in hand Mick then tried to strike the pussy on the back as he had been taught to do by the old hunter of the village. The hunter, Henry McFee, had said if he would strike the pussy a quick blow on the back, the animal would be killed painlessly and without injuring the fur. Mick took careful aim, but Miss Pussy

THE BIG FOUR

was too quick for him, — she had been playing possum and had hoped, by feigning sleep, to escape her fate. When Mick came near enough to strike, she sprang up and ran swiftly away with her bushy tail held high over her back. Making all speed she reached her hole in a hollow tree, where she completely disappeared.

Over stones and brambles, Mick followed, but Pussy was too fast for him. Mick's first thought was to make her prisoner, so he filled the entrance to the pussy's home with stones, and then sat down to think what next he must do.

While Mick sat thinking very seriously he heard a sharp bark, and turning, he saw his dog Muggs bounding toward him. He was glad to see his playmate. It was lonesome work hunting alone, but he had purposely left Muggins at home to-day.

“Well, Muggs, I'm glad to see you. I've got an animal in that tree, Muggs, and I wonder if I could trust you to stand guard here while I run home and get the chloroform bottle. I'm going to chloroform that pussy cat like Ma



"You are a gentleman, you are, Muggs"

—AND ONE MORE

chloroformed our old cat when she got hurt. See? Think you can do it, Muggs?"

The dog sniffed the air and looked dubious, but finally settled down with both eyes glued to the old tree.

"Good, Muggs, you are a gentleman, you are, Muggs, and I can trust you under any circumstances. Some folks call you my mongrel cur. I don't care, 'cause I know you are a gentleman and a fellah's friend, Muggs. Good old Muggins!"

Evidently this method of moral suasion suited Muggins for he winked at Micky understandingly and his homely face seemed actually to smile as he settled down to his task of watchful waiting as Mick started on a run down through the woods to the road that led to his home in the outskirts of the village.

It was not long before Muggins pricked up his ears when he saw Micky coming breathless and red faced through the woods.

"Now, Muggs, I'm going to show that pussy that if she is smarter than I am at running, I am cleverer than she is at thinking."

THE BIG FOUR

Mick soaked a big sponge with the chloroform and quickly pulled away one of the stones and popped the sponge in the hole, closed the stone in place, and then took off his coat and held it closely over the stones and hole.

Muggins looked mystified, cocking one eye at his little master — if only he could speak his questions, poor, bottled-up human dog!

Micky waited some time and then carefully removed his coat and one by one the stones. There was the pussy, curled on the ground, and this time she was not playing possum for she did not respond to Muggins's sharp barking.

Micky handled the little animal very gingerly and made Muggins keep at a distance.

"I got to get her home, Muggs. I can't drag her, 'cause 'twould spoil her fur. I'll tell you, I'll carry her on a hemlock bough. See, Muggs!" Micky broke from a hemlock tree a thick needled bough and with two sticks lifted her upon it, which operation interested and excited Muggins. Then they started for home, Muggins taking the lead and Micky following, holding the pussy-laden bough out before him.

—AND ONE MORE

When they reached home Micky put his burden down outside the gate, and, as he opened it, Muggs squeezed through with Mick and sat down with him on the porch steps to help consider the next step.

Fortunately Mrs. Mac Rae was not yet home from her day's work at the doctor's house, where she always helped on Mondays.

"Now, Muggs, comes the awful question of skinning the animal. I guess I'll bury her, and we'll run down town and get Henry to come up and help."

No sooner said than done, and the hunter came back with Micky and Muggins, and most skillfully showed Micky how to skin and prepare the animal for sale. And that evening before bedtime Micky was a happy boy, for he had his full initiation fee in hand and the meeting was to be held on the following evening.

But Micky's "Waterloo" came the next morning when he went into the schoolroom. Poor Mick had only one suit of clothes. The teacher sniffed and frowned, and closed all the windows, which of course made the matter worse. Finally Miss Thompson, the teacher,

THE BIG FOUR

said, "Is there any one here who has been near a—a—a—pussy cat that lives in the woods?"

Every member of the Big Four held his breath. Tim felt like just springing to his feet to claim the pussy cat, when Mick, with fiery red face and Washingtonian air, stood up clinging wildly to his desk with one hand and, holding up the other, said,

"I did it, Miss Thompson. I caught a—a—wood pussy" (the rest of the scholars, except the Big Four, were tittering). Mick continued, "I'm awful sorry I came, Miss Thompson, and I think I better go home." At this Mick's dog Muggs came bounding in the room to him as if he felt there was trouble brewing for his master.

Mick's confession had only aroused the interest and curiosity of the children, and Miss Thompson wisely said that Micky could stay if there were no opposition. Every hand went up for Mick.

Miss Thompson said she thought they might go outside and sit on the grass for a time while Micky told them just how he had caught the pussy cat that lived in the woods. The story

—AND ONE MORE

lost nothing in the telling. Micky left little to the imagination, and the children had thrills enough for one morning. Even Mick's dog was allowed to stay by his master during the session, and he seemed to feel something of a hero, too.

By some means or other Miss Thompson managed to get a new suit of clothes for Micky before the next day, and order was restored in the school. Of course the Chiefs were all on tiptoe to hear more from Mick, and each one was prompt in his attendance at the meeting after school.

Discipline, however, must be maintained, and no one asked a question until Big Chief Peter called the meeting to order and said,

“The first thing under discussion is Chief Never Too Late's presentation of his initiation fee and how he got it.”

Micky jumped up and explained the means by which he had obtained all of his plunder. Then from a well-covered basket he brought out, first a fine woodchuck skin, well cleaned and cured; two gray squirrel skins, one live rabbit, two dozen fine, big red apples, tempting enough to make any one's mouth water. Next

THE BIG FOUR

came a bunch of the most wonderful feathers the boys had ever seen, red, blue, yellow and green, dyed with the Diamond Dyes Mick's mother used for her rag rugs.

A murmur of real applause went around the group; then from Mick's pocket came a ten-cent piece. Last, but by no means least, and surely not unheralded, came the beautiful skunk skin.

Then the boys rose in a body and cheered the little barefooted boy, — cheered and cheered, until Micky felt that he would rather be Micky Mac Rae in the Big Four than President of the United States. It's all in the same line anyway — appreciation of work well done.

Peter then called the meeting to order and appointed Micky and Jack as a committee of two to sell at the highest price possible the skins, with some squirrel skins he and Billy had brought, and also the rabbit, and authorized them to buy the necessary red, white and blue paint with the proceeds of the sale. Peter had already agreed to borrow some green paint from his neighbor and friend, Deacon Beabout. The Big Four felt greatly the need of a band,

—AND ONE MORE

but there seemed no possibility of a combination in that line. So it was decided that little Tim was to sing the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." The boys little knew how much more wonderful little Tim's voice would be than any band.

Tim had a clear, birdlike soprano, sweet and appealing in quality. And so it was decided that Tim would ride the old white horse, as he could be more easily heard from that height than on foot. Mick whispered to Tim, "The old horse is safe, I never saw her shy."

"Now, Chiefs, we will disband to meet here promptly at nine o'clock 4th of July morning to paint our animals and to get our feathers on, and all in readiness for the parade at one-thirty o'clock. We will bring our lunch with us, as we cannot leave our animals alone; they might roll and get all smudged. At nine o'clock here we must be, with every animal we can get, our flag, our feathers, and our paint," said Peter.

The Chiefs then literally fell on the apples, and were beyond all discipline and order for a good half hour's fun, and then they separated and went to their homes.

CHAPTER III.



ON the morning of the 4th of July there assembled at the camping place of the Big Four and One More a company the equal of which was never before seen in Pemberton—Big Chief Peter leading an unwilling cow; Timmy drawing an express wagon, which was gaily decorated with firecrackers and bunting and loaded with a cage of Tim's own designing containing two pretty little rabbits, snow white with flopping tan-brown ears. Poor Billy Bruce came in, red of face and short of breath, tugging at a rope to which was attached at the other end his old billy goat, who evidently was not in favor of being "camelflaged" into something he was n't. Next came Jack triumphantly waving a dozen little garter snakes as his donation to the parade. From some quarter he had got a costume suggesting one worn by a snake charmer in the last circus that had visited Pemberton, and he looked his part sure enough.

—AND ONE MORE

Big Chief Peter looked around proudly at the assembled company, nodded approvingly, and then said,

“Where’s Mick?”

But before any one could answer they heard the hoof beats of the ownerless horse. And soon there appeared Micky riding the old gray horse.

Micky was dressed like something they had never seen before, — part clown, part jockey, and part Micky; as to head, all Indian; his face painted in spots of all the colors of the Diamond Dyes. He had manufactured a long nose, also dyed, and big flapping ears held in place by a generous piece of chewing gum.

Cheers of joy and admiration greeted Mick’s arrival. He explained he had come a long way around to avoid meeting any one. The boys lost no time in getting at work. They began with the horse. While two painted, one gathered grass, and the other fed it to the patient old animal. It took some time to paint the horse, for the boys had to stop often to admire the result of their work. It surely was a work of art when finished — patriotic art. It was a

THE BIG FOUR

hot day, and the boys were anxious, fearing their paint might run.

Next came the cow, and a more perfect product of stripes and polka dots never was seen — in or out of a parade. When it came to the goat the paint was nearly all gone, so Micky took the brush and dipped it in first one can and then another until a more mottled, chicken-poxed, measly-looking animal you never saw than Billy Bruce's billy goat. The wet paint attracted the flies, and the animals soon had a freckled appearance.

"Oh, boys, will it ever come off?" exclaimed Billy in dismay.

"Sure," said Mick, "when it rains; anyway, ain't it a good cause to be sacrificed in? There never was such a show in Pemberton as this is going to be."

Billy sighed in a resigned sort of way and said no more.

When the boys had finished the animals, they turned to their own decoration, and here they let their fancy run riot. With all the paint they could scrape from the empty cans and a little that had splashed from the horse and cow,

—AND ONE MORE

they dotted and striped their own faces, then, taking off their coats and trousers, leaving only their short-sleeved shirts and underdrawers, they stained with walnut stain their bare legs and arms. Then they fastened a belt of feathers around their waists, another around their ankles and wrists, and finally, to crown all, they fastened a headdress of red, white and blue feathers standing upright on their heads, and a real crown of feathers on the head of the old horse.

The town clock struck one, the parade was to assemble at the village park at one-thirty. Peter marshalled his men and beasts, and holding high the American flag led the way. Next to him came Timmy on the patriotic horse; then Jack, drawing Tim's cart of pinkish-green rabbits with one hand and waving the twisting snakes in the other; next came Billy and his unwilling goat, being coaxingly fed by Billy when it balked; then Micky leading the polka-dotted cow, following willingly as it munched on a bunch of grass which Mick had ingeniously fastened to a drooping stick tied to the cow's horns.

THE BIG FOUR

What a sight for Pemberton!

As the boys drew up to the park, where the parade was assembling, the band was playing patriotic airs, firecrackers were popping, and bunting was waving everywhere. The Big Four and One More arrived in a blaze of glory; but when the animals turned and displayed their camouflaged sides, the people dropped flags and fireworks — then the base drum rattled — the trumpet blared — and the clarionet squealed.

The Boy Scouts at first stood with mouths open, and then realizing who they were and what was expected of them, they gathered their mouths together and stood at attention, but unconsciously their hands saluted as the patriotic spectacle of the Big Four and One More went by.

Some one suggested that the Big Four take the lead of the line, but Peter modestly said that they preferred to be at the rear, suggesting politely that their guests, the Boy Scouts, should go to the head, following the Mayor and his Council, who rode in Pemberton's finest automobile.

—AND ONE MORE

Micky's eyes were popping and his mouth was round with admiration of the Scouts, whose uniforms looked so trim and soldier-like, and who carried themselves in such a military way. A thrill of admiration, with, I fear, a mixture of envy, went through the Big Four and One More as they saw the Scouts march, in order, to their place in the line. All was ready, and the parade started.

The arrangement was, that the band was to play for the march up the main street, and then as they turned at the soldiers' monument Timmy was to begin the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and Peter had asked all who would to join in the chorus.

The streets were lined with enthusiastic townspeople; porches and windows were all filled along the way. Flags were flying from every house. It was a truly festive occasion for Pemberton.

Up the street the line marched, first the band, and then the Mayor with his Council, then the Boy Scouts, every one of them erect and fine, eyes straight to the fore. Next came the veterans of the Civil War, feeble and few,

THE BIG FOUR

but happy and proud. The veterans of the Spanish War followed them, and next came the Firemen in all their red and gold. Then, the admired of all admirers, came the Big Four and One More in all their painted glory.

A proud hour it was for Peter and his Chiefs and Micky Mac Rae was only "touching the high places." The band played "America," "Star Spangled Banner," and "Marching Through Georgia" as they marched up the street, but when they turned at the monument Timmy's great moment had come. He lifted his head, the feathers waving proudly; the old gray horse seemed to feel *his* importance, too, for he held his feather-crowned head high as if he were trying to make the onlookers forget his old stiff knees.

There was no sound but the tread, tread, tread of the marching feet as Timmy's clear sweet voice rang out the stirring words,

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming
of the Lord."

As the little boy sang all faces were turned to him. Tears rolled down the faces of the veterans. The women along the way

— A N D O N E M O R E

waved frantically. When Timmy came to the chorus,

“Glory, glory, hallelujah
His truth is marching on”

every one, in and out of the parade, was singing with him. Micky was singing and sobbing (although he didn't know why) at the same time. Peter felt an awful lump in his throat and it was hard to sing, but he knew the dignity of the Big Four and One More must be maintained, so he choked down his emotions and raised the flag a little higher and marched bravely on with eyes glued to the colors.

As the line neared the Town Hall the fire bell raised its voice in celebration: cling-clang, cling-clang it rang furiously.

This was too much for the old horse, who remembered the days of his youth when he, as a fire horse, had answered that call at all hours of the day or night.

He turned sharply from the line, making for the fire house,—so sharply that poor little Tim was thrown to the pavement, striking his arm on the curb.

THE BIG FOUR

The line was broken and all was confusion; Peter and the rest of the Big Four ran to Tim, but the Boy Scouts were already at Tim's side giving first aid by strapping his arm to his side thereby holding it immobile. The Scouts made a stretcher from the poles they carried and two of the khaki coats, fitting the sleeves over the poles and buttoning the coats together for the stretcher.

Skillfully and gently the Scouts lifted little Tim, carrying him to his home. Peter ran ahead to prepare Mrs. Ware for Tim's coming, and Jack went to get his father, the doctor. The Scouts' first aid was done so well and quickly that Bruce and Micky looked in amazement and admiration as they walked by Tim's side, cheering him.

Mrs. Ware from her porch had seen that something had gone wrong in the parade, and she was just starting out to inquire as Peter came up the walk. When she heard that Tim was being brought home she quickly turned to the house, hurrying to Tim's room to make ready for his arrival.

The Scouts followed Peter with Tim. They carried him carefully to his room and lifted

— A N D O N E M O R E

him gently onto his bed. Dr. Bennett was at Tim's side almost as quickly as the boys reached the house. On examination he found that Tim's only trouble was a broken arm, which with the Scouts' intelligent aid he quickly set. Tim was made as comfortable as possible. The brave little chap's one thought ever since he had reached the house was to comfort and assure his mother and the boys. When they felt sure that Tim was all right and there was nothing more for them to do, the Scouts slipped quietly out of the house, rejoined their troop, and were soon marching in military order to the station, to take their train to St. Paul.

The Big Four and One More stayed to be ready to do anything Mrs. Ware might need. They sat on the stairs, thoughtful but very grotesque figures.

The feathers were drooping and the polka dots had run in dismal furrows. Their hearts were heavy and the tears would come when they heard Tim moan. Micky's nose and ears were dangling limply around his neck. Some one exclaimed, "The animals!" At which they all jumped up and went out and down

THE BIG FOUR

the street where they found some kind friends had tied the animals to the fence around the Park and the boys quietly led them away for a scrub. The snakes had sought their own freedom.

A WEEK LATER

In the auditorium of the Town Hall of Pemberton the evening of the 12th of July were gathered about twenty boys. Among them were Peter Fendall, Billy Bruce and Jack Bennett.

Sitting on the platform was a khaki-clad Scout Master from Chicago, who had come at the request of the Big Four to form a Boy Scout troop at Pemberton. At the rear of the platform was a great American flag presented by the Mayor in recognition of the Big Four's patriotism on the 4th of July.

At one end of the platform was the village band. The Scout Master came forward and asked Peter, as Captain of the Big Four, to come to the platform. Peter, blushing furiously, came forward. The master took his hand and asked him to sit with him. Just then the door

— A N D O N E M O R E

flew open and in burst Micky Mac Rae, breathless in his excitement.

“Oh, Peter, fellahs, here they come, and oh, here’s Tim and—” But Micky didn’t finish for the Boy Scouts marched in and on the shoulders of the two leaders was little Timmy Ware, his arm in a sling and his face a bit pale, but happy as a lord. He waved his good arm and shouted,

“Cheer, cheer for the Boy Scouts.”

The band played. The Scouts carried Tim to a chair on the platform where the Scout Master greeted him warmly, and then called the meeting to order. Micky took his place by Tim’s side uninvited but unconsciously assured.

After the Pemberton Troop had been formed and names taken, the Scout Master said,

“Scouts of St. Paul and boy friends of Pemberton! It is a great pleasure to come here to form a new Troop.

“I congratulate Pemberton on its having boys of such earnestness, forcefulness and enthusiastic patriotism as the ‘Big Four and One More.’

THE BIG FOUR

“I want to emphasize the great need your country has for just such enthusiasm and patriotism. America needs now the interest and work of American boys in Americanizing the immigrant boys and girls from foreign countries.

“No pioneer of this great state — no general of our army could serve his country better than a Boy Scout who wins the affection and respect and creates loyalty in the hearts of the foreigners coming to make their homes in our dear country and who will have a voice in her government.

“Remember the Scout principles are loyalty —bravery—kindness—chivalry and courtesy.”

The meeting was now opened by the Scouts standing, and with right hand raised — the thumb and little finger together making the Scout symbol — they took the Scout oath. Then came the pledge to the Flag. It was a solemn ceremony.

The lights were all darkened except the one spot-light which played on the stars and stripes of “Old Glory.”

The boys, old and new Scouts, stood at salute and pledged their allegiance to the

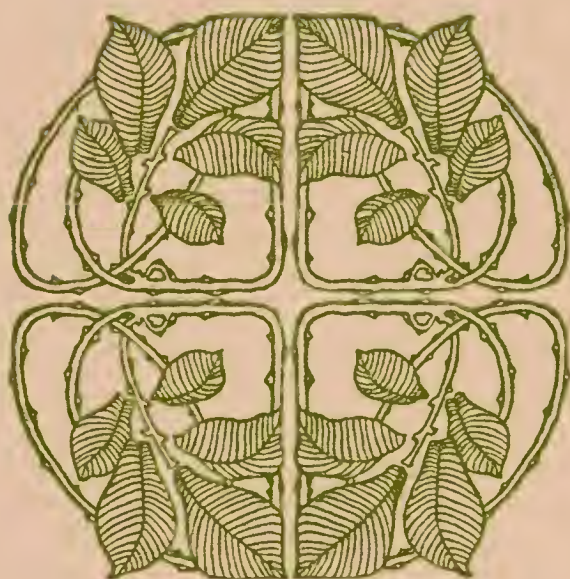
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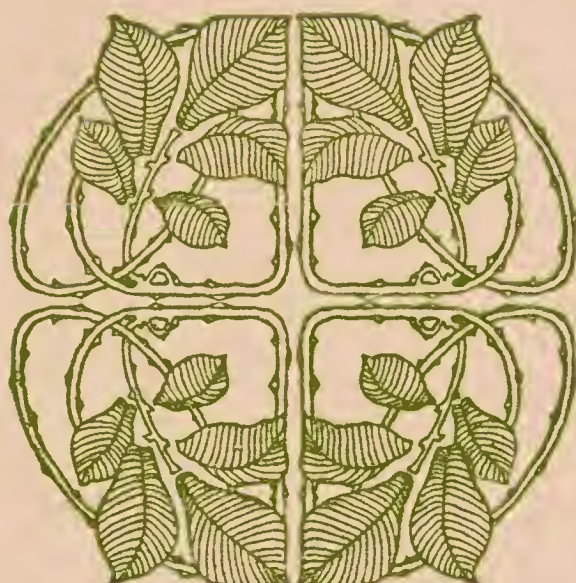
Flag which means loyalty to America, her laws and constitution. Singing of “The Star Spangled Banner” followed, and the music almost raised the roof of the old Town Hall.

When the ceremony was over the Scout Master whispered to Tim.

The little fellow stood and raising his good arm sang — his whole heart poured out in the words:

“My country ’tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.”





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The
Big
Four
and one
more